The Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security

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The Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security

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Less than a year ago the international community marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations.

Born in the years of the most devastating war in history which cost mankind tremendous human and material losses, the United Nations was conceived as an important international machinery for the preservation of world peace and security. For a person like myself who had participated in the war against Nazi Germany and witnessed the horrors of war and human suffering, the birth of the United Nations meant a great deal since the United Nations Charter proclaimed important goals such as saving "succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind" and uniting "our strength to maintain international peace and security".

While reading the United Nations Charter again and again I feel great admiration for those who so wisely and unmistakably conceived these basic ideals of the United Nations Organization. In 1945, 51 Member States gave the United Nations a clear mandate under Article 1 of the Charter "to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace" and to bring about by peaceful means "adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace".

The historic importance of this mandate can be fully assessed only against a long record of numerous wars which for many centuries plagued mankind. According to recent studies conducted by scholars, 93 international wars were fought in the last 150 years between the end of the Napoleonic period and recent times. Altogether, 144 nations were involved in these wars which were under way in all but 24 of these 150 years, and there were 29 million battle casualties exclusive of civilians.

Many changes have taken place in the world since the creation of the United Nations. But the potential role of the United Nations in the preservation

of peace and security has not diminished. Nor have such acts disappeared which demand urgent action on the part of the Organization. Acts of aggression take place in various areas of the world, thousands of people perish in wars and devastating losses are suffered by all concerned. Incalculable material resources and human efforts are diverted to feed the continuing nuclear and conventional armaments race.

Whole areas of the world are split into opposing military alliances, whose very existence often leads to additional tension and mutual distrust. This is especially true of Europe where the opposing armed forces possessing nuclear and thermonuclear weapons have faced each other for more than 20 years. All this means that the purposes of the United Nations are far from being achieved. Much still has to be accomplished by our Organization in order to contribute to the creation of the essential conditions for strengthening international security and for ensuring a peaceful life for all peoples, regardless of their race, religion or political belief.

The task of strengthening international security is a perennial problem. Many States and peoples would definitely benefit if the United Nations could ensure their security. The reasons are manifold.

One cannot establish a viable political atmosphere in various areas of the world if the unbridled race of armaments continues unchecked, if tension and the propaganda of the cold war continue. We cannot fully harness modern science and technology and use their fantastic potential for human development, nor can we raise living standards of peoples significantly if the achievements of science and technology will be used, not for productive purposes, but for the further sophistication of the means of war. It is difficult to develop mutually beneficial trade among various States, especially States with different economic and social systems, if relations among States remain strained and international trade barriers continue to limit the free flow of exports and imports among States.

Despite these self-evident facts, there are still some political leaders who assert that all measures aimed at strengthening international security will be futile. References are made to previous efforts in this direction, which were doomed, because of contemporary international frictions, and of the certain traits attributed to human nature. The conclusion is made that any new efforts aimed at strengthening international security are redundant. Regardless of such arguments, the fact is indisputable that all efforts for the strengthening of international peace and security are worthwhile, that apathy is the real culprit, and that there is hardly a State in the world whose interests would not be enhanced through practical measures adopted for the strengthening of international peace and security.

The task of strengthening international security constitutes a challenge to the entire international community. The fruition of endeavours in this direction will be mutually beneficial to all States of the world.

One cannot say that the United Nations has ignored the important problems of international security and peace. Some good ideas aimed at solving these problems have been considered from time to time by the Security Council and the General Assembly.

Comparing the results of deliberations in the field of strengthening peace and security, with the realities and challenges of our time, however, it would be too optimistic to say that the United Nations has successfully coped with the tasks assigned to it by the Charter or that it has realistically lived up to all its fundamental responsibilities in this area.

It goes without saying that as long as the issues of peace and security remain unsolved, the activities of the United Nations in other areas, for instance, economic development, cannot be fully successful. The achievement of international security will undoubtedly be conducive to the attainment of economic and social progress in all fields.

The adoption of the "Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security" at the twenty-fifth, "silver anniversary", session of the General Assembly constitutes a landmark in the history of the United Nations. Now the United Nations has a tangible opportunity to proceed from an over-all discussion of problems relating to international security to a stage where concrete action aimed at the strengthening of international peace and security can be realized.

In this presentation, I should like to convey some views regarding the impact on the United Nations of the "Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security".

This Declaration was adopted by the General Assembly along with other documents of global import, such as: (i) the "Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in Accordance with the Charter of the United Nations"; (ii) the "Declaration on the Occasion of the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the United Nations"; (iii) the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor and the Subsoil Thereof, which was endorsed by the General Assembly; (iv) the "Programme of Action for the Full Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples". Among these historic documents, the "Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security" can be regarded as the foremost achievement of the anniversary session.

As Mr. Edvard Hambro, the President of the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly described it, the Declaration is a great contribution to peace, auguring well for the future of the United Nations and together with the other documents "cast light on the road we must follow towards a peaceful and well organized community of nations", and provides "a source of inspiration and guidance for the United Nations and the international community as a whole".

The Declaration addresses itself to the imperative need of building peace in the world. It is, in fact, a new initiative to promote peace, security, disarmament and economic and social progress for all mankind, and for making the United Nations a more effective instrument for the achievement of these goals. It reflects the measures that United Nations Members have deemed necessary to strengthen international security. These measures range from the reaffirmation of the purposes and principles of the Charter to emphasis on renunciation of force and the inadmissibility of acquisition of territory by conquest. It establishes the connexion between international security, economic and social development

and disarmament. It underlines the special role of the Security Council regarding international peace and security; peaceful settlement; peace-keeping; promotes international co-operation, including regional, subregional and bilateral co-operation among States. It emphasizes the rule of international law and the definition of aggression; decolonization; human rights and the universality of the United Nations.

The very fact that extensive involvement, arduous work and spirit of compromise—the requisites for the adoption of the Declaration—have in effect been attained, attests to the general conviction as to the need for such a Declaration. Member States acted in a fashion which tends to persuade all concerned that, rather than being simply a twenty-fifth anniversary symbolic document, the Declaration can be regarded as perhaps a co-ordinated thrust to redirect and rededicate Member States to the essential goals of the Organization.

Background

Deliberations of the General Assembly concerning the item entitled "The Strengthening of International Security" were conducted in response to an initiative by the Soviet Union which requested its inclusion on the agenda of the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly in 1969. In a Memorandum explaining the purpose of the item the USSR Government had stated that in view of the main trends in the development of international relations since the Second World War, and especially in recent years, it was urgent that the United Nations step up its efforts towards discharging its fundamental responsibility, namely the maintenance of international peace and security.

The Memorandum indicated that because of the increasingly evident need for a fresh collective effort to strengthen international security, the General Assembly should take a decision which would set out the requirements that would effectively promote the strengthening of peace, and address itself to all States, both Members and non-Members which were also under obligation to act in accordance with United Nations principles as might be necessary for the maintenance of international peace.

The draft appeal which accompanied the USSR Memorandum would have the General Assembly declare that it was necessary to ensure, without delay, the withdrawal of troops from territories occupied as a result of action of the armed forces of some States against other States and people defending their independence won as a result of the collapse of the colonial system, the cessation of all measures for the suppression of independence of peoples still under colonial rule and the observance of the decisions of the Security Council on the withdrawal of occupation troops from foreign territories; declare that all States of the world should be guided in their foreign policies by the vital interests of all people in preserving peace and strengthening such security, and that these States abide, in their international relations, by the principles of peaceful coexistence; express the conviction that regional security systems set up and acting in accordance with the Charter could promote the strengthening of international peace and security; recall that the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international

peace and security had been conferred on the Security Council by Members of the United Nations who had undertaken to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council; reaffirm that it was of great importance to formulate a generally acceptable definition of aggression, agree on the principles of friendly relations and co-operation of States, and arrive at an understanding on United Nations peace-keeping operations on the basis of strict observance of the United Nations Charter.

The proposed item and the draft appeal gave rise to a significant debate held during 19 meetings of the First Committee with the participation of over 80 delegations. In the course of the debate it became clear that a majority of the delegations supported, in priniciple, the proposal that the Assembly adopt a formal document laying down general guide-lines for the strengthening of international security. For many delegations the discussion offered a welcome opportunity to state their views concerning the scope of political problems facing the United Nations and the world community. Many of these statements were devoted, in a large measure, to a reassessment of the effectiveness of the United Nations as an instrument for the maintenance of peace and security, and suggested means for improving the effectiveness of the Organization. A number of delegations pointed out that any failure of the United Nations was not due to any deficiencies in the Charter but to the refusal of Member States to abide by it. Other delegations stressed the need of including in the appeal references to disarmament and economic development as basic elements in the strengthening of international security.

During the consideration of the item, three draft resolutions were tabled by a total of 25 States, in addition to the aforesaid draft appeal proposed by the USSR. As a result of its discussions, the General Assembly adopted resolution 2606 (XXV) in which it noted the constructive and extensive debate on this item; emphasized the importance which Member States attached to the strengthening of international security; a belief was expressed that on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, the General Assembly should consider appropriate recommendations on the subject. The resolution requested Member States to inform the Secretary-General of their views and proposals; and decided to include the item in the agenda of the twenty-fifth session. The resolution was adopted by acclamation.

The results of the deliberations at the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly were most encouraging. They focused attention on an over-all review of the United Nations as an instrument committed to the idea of universal collective security and international co-operation, and put the problems and achievements of the United Nations in a proper historical perspective. They gave a sense of direction to United Nations efforts to develop further mutual understanding in the difficult area of political and security co-operation.

The deliberations also showed that the General Assembly was aware of the importance of the question when it decided to give Member Governments time for studying various aspects of the proposal together with the views that had been expressed during the debate in the First Committee. The understanding

was that relevant action would be taken at the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly, during the anniversary of the Organization.

By giving the States an opportunity to elaborate their position in writing, the General Assembly thus obtained more elements for its future decision on the substance. It is to be recalled that between the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth sessions, 54 Member States responded to the request provided for in resolution 2606 (XXIV), to forward their views and proposals along with information as to any measures they had taken for the purpose of strengthening international security. In addition, the German Democratic Republic sent two communications.

In May 1970, the Secretary-General submitted a report (A/7922 and Add. 1-6) containing these views and proposals. The responses represented a wide range of positions concerning the role and activities of the United Nations in the present world situation and laid down a basis for future action at the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly. In the introduction to his report, the Secretary-General stated that the greatest obstacle to the strengthening of international security arose from the growing tendency of States "to revert to a reliance on force as a means of resolving their international differences". In the opinion of the Secretary-General, this could be checked by strengthening both the peace-keeping and peace-making functions of the United Nations. The Secretary-General stressed that the main prerequisite for strengthening international security was for all States to live up to the principles of the United Nations Charter and to rededicate themselves once again to the norms of international behaviour and morality set out in the Charter. The Secretary-General reiterated his conviction that the full potential of the United Nations as an instrument for the maintenance of international peace and security could be only realized when the principle of universality of membership was more fully applied. In conclusion, the Secretary-General expressed his hope that, by the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, it would be possible for the General Assembly to take meaningful action regarding the strengthening of international security.

When the item was considered at the twenty-fifth session, two draft resolutions were introduced at the beginning of the general debate in the First Committee. One was sponsored by eight Socialist countries and another sponsored by six Western European and other countries. In the course of the general debate, two additional draft resolutions were tabled—one by 23 Latin American countries and another by 33 non-aligned countries. Thus there were a total of 70 Member States which showed interest in the question *inter alia* by becoming direct co-sponsors. Each of the four drafts reflected the approaches and particular measures which their sponsors considered essential for the strengthening of international security.

Commenting on their draft Declaration, the Socialist countries saw its political significance in the fact that it was based on the prohibition of the threat or use of force in international relations. The draft stressed the importance of such elements as the need to put an end to existing conflicts, the principle of the inadmissibility of the occupation of foreign territory by force, non-interference in the internal affairs of other States; the elimination of all forms of colonialism and racism; respect for the right of every people to choose freely its own social

system. The Socialist countries also emphasized the importance of steps toward the creation of an effective system of universal collective security, without military alliances, and expressed the desire that the final text should take the form not just of a resolution but of a Declaration.

The sponsors of the Western draft emphasized the importance of non-intervention, the full use of all the principal organs of the United Nations, including the International Court of Justice, the establishment of guide-lines on peace-keeping, with equitable apportionment of expenses, and the development and codification of international law.

The Latin American countries emphasized that the text of a Declaration should reassert the close relationship between the concepts of international security, disarmament and the economic development of developing nations. They were opposed to any implications which might justify theories of balance of power and spheres of influence. Some Latin American countries considered the Declaration as an initial step in the long-needed diplomatic reactivation of the United Nations and called for the establishment of subsidiary organs of the Security Council for the peaceful settlement of international disputes.

The sponsors of the non-aligned draft likewise insisted on linking the problems of international security with the needs of economic development and with disarmament. In addition they called for the elimination of all forms of colonialism and condemned the policies of *apartheid*. They also called for vigorous efforts to attain the universality of the United Nations in order to increase significantly its effectiveness in strengthening international peace and security.

The First Committee, faced with the aforementioned four draft proposals, and after 15 meetings, resorted to the formation of an informal working group composed of two members each selected from the co-sponsors of the four proposals. The working group, in which other States including sponsors of amendments participated, was charged with the arduous task of harmonizing the varying views and arriving at a unified draft Declaration. Following long but constructive discussions, the working group, assisted by the First Committee's Bureau, succeeded in working out an agreed text of a Declaration. Thirty-two co-sponsors from among the 70 which had sponsored the aforesaid four draft proposals as well as four other States joined in sponsoring this amalgamated draft which was thus sponsored by a total of 36 Members. After further consideration and amendment and two additional meetings, the proposal was eventually adopted by the General Assembly on 16 December 1970 as the "Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security" (resolution 2734 (XXV)). I might stress again at this point that an important prerequisite to success was the prevailing spirit of dedication to realistic compromise. Member States as a whole were inspired as a result and emulated that example towards the adoption of the Declaration.

Without the constant pursuit of compromise, either the Declaration would not have materialized, or it would have been deprived of the near unanimity which it commanded. Though a number of Member States voting for the Declaration indicated that they would have drafted the text quite differently, they fully subscribed to the final version in realization of the need for and endorsement of the spirit of compromise.

Thus the Declaration became the property of the whole community of nations and, as one delegate put it, one of the most important and far-reaching documents to emerge in the United Nations since the Charter of San Francisco.

Significance

The political significance of the Declaration rests in the fact that it reflects common aspirations of the overwhelming majority of Member States with respect to international peace and security.

It should be noted that in the United Nations Charter the goal of strengthening security is a basic one and that the concept of international peace and security is profoundly embodied in the Charter. However, in analysing this concept one can reach the conclusion that peace and security involve international co-operation in every form of political, economic, social and cultural endeavours. Thus, the security of Members depends not simply on the special arrangements provided for under the Charter for the handling of possible or actual threats to peace, but on the maintenance and development of the Organization as a whole, on its ability to contribute more effectively to the ensurance of the security and independence of all nations.

By adopting the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security the General Assembly reaffirmed once again the universal and unconditional validity of the purposes and principles of the Charter as the basis of relations among States irrespective of their size, geographical location, level of development or political, economic and social systems.

The Declaration calls upon all States to adhere strictly in their international relations to those purposes and principles. It solemnly reaffirms the sovereignty and independence of States and the right of peoples to determine their own destinies. The Declaration prohibits the threat or use of force, calls for respect of the national unity and territorial integrity of all States. It emphasizes that "the territory of a State shall not be the object of acquisition by another State resulting from the threat or use of force, that no territorial acquisition resulting from the threat or use of force shall be recognized as legal".

The renewal by Member States of their commitments to observe fully in their international relations the principles and purposes of the Charter is of a special significance for the efforts of nations to build a system of effective security in the world. A stable peace and security can only be reached in a climate of mutual respect and confidence among nations, which is inseparable from conducting the relations between all States on the basis of these principles.

The Declaration calls for an increased effectiveness of the United Nations in strengthening international security by activating the respective provisions of the Charter concerning the peaceful settlement of disputes; peace-keeping; measures to build, maintain and restore international peace and security; and by having the resolutions of the United Nations implemented by all Members.

In this respect the Declaration represents a singular call of Member States to

revitalize the United Nations in various areas of its global mission and to satisfy the long-felt need to bridge the gap heretofore encountered between the goals and the actual practice of the Organization. From this angle, the basic functions assigned to it by the Charter are interrelated and synchronized under a single and broad common denominator, namely, international security.

The Declaration contains an appeal to Member States "to enhance by all possible means the authority and effectiveness of the Security Council and of its decisions". It underlines the role of the General Assembly and the need in achieving the universality of the United Nations. Furthermore, the Declaration recommends that all States contribute to the efforts to ensure peace and security for all nations and to establish, in accordance with the Charter, an effective system of universal collective security, without military alliances. It stresses that the achievement of a stable peace and security requires the cessation and reversal of the nuclear and conventional arms race at an early date, the elimination of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and the conclusion of a treaty on general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

The Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security also gives due importance to the problems of the speedy elimination of colonialism, of the urgency of ensuring universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It resolutely condemns the criminal policy of *apartheid*.

Last but not least, the General Assembly reiterated in this important document the need to undertake urgent and concerted international action based on a global strategy aimed at reducing and eliminating the economic gap between developed and developing countries. The call for such an action is in keeping with the broader understanding that the promotion of international co-operation based on the principle of equal rights and on strict respect for the sovereignty and independence of States can contribute to the strengthening of international security.

The Declaration further envisages a course of action to readjust the Organization to current international reality, dispensing with an effort to revise the United Nations Charter at this juncture. The Declaration is, in fact, a delicately balanced entity which takes into account all the elements or components of the Charter and which cements the positive elements that have been developed during the Organization's 25 years of existence.

The success attained in the adoption of the Declaration has derived much impetus from the deliberations inherited from the twenty-fourth session. Therefore, the Declaration may rightly be regarded as the fruit of two consecutive sessions. Moreover, since progress towards its attainment continued between the two sessions, about 15 months of endeavour were dedicated to the preparation of the Declaration. Nevertheless, work has not yet been completed and the twenty-sixth session will further deliberate on the issue by virtue of an anticipated report by the Secretary-General on steps taken in pursuance of the Declaration. Thus, the endeavour for the actual strengthening of international security is expected to be further extended into the future.

Prospects

The prospects for the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security will be closely related to its implementation, the success or failure of which depends on the Members of the Organization, on their willingness and readiness to abide by the provisions of the Declaration.

Very few Member States have attributed weaknesses encountered in the operation of the United Nations, in the field of international security, to the United Nations Charter. They have rather expressed the conviction that, through dedicated implementation, the Charter could prove itself a highly versatile and workable instrument.

Furthermore, discussions on the strengthening of international security amply demonstrated the conviction on the part of Member States as to the importance of implementation of decisions of the Security Council in accordance with Article 25 of the Charter, and as to respect, as provided in the Charter, for the resolutions of United Nations organs responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security and the peaceful settlement of disputes. This conviction was specifically included in one of the important articles of the Declaration. This is a matter of crucial significance *vis-à-vis* the prospects for the Declaration.

The fact that the Secretary-General has transmitted the text of the Declaration to all Member States, and has also drawn the attention of the Security Council to its provisions concerning the Council's work, should herald closer-than-ever ties and collaboration between the General Assembly and the Security Council for the strengthening of international security. This aspect is quite singular and constitutes the first step in the endeavour to realize and enhance the Declaration's prospects.

The replies from Member States to the Secretary-General will be the basis for the consideration of the item at the twenty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

Given the broad scope of the Declaration and differences of emphasis as may still exist in the interpretation of certain Member States as to ways and means of implementation, it can be expected that the process of implementation may take some time.

In this connexion, the question may be raised as to how the Declaration should work, how it should achieve its very purpose. It is my firm belief, that the Declaration in itself represents a broad programme for the strengthening of international peace and security. The implementation of the provisions of this programme will help to realize the important objectives set forth in the Declaration. It ought to be possible to find ways that might attain its objectives and might set out within the framework of the United Nations a new trend towards the strengthening of international security. In other words, it might be possible to give efforts towards international security a real chance to be fruitful. This is of particular importance in the political and security field, with emphasis on peace-making and peace-keeping. In this emphasis reside, perhaps, the most promising prospects for the Declaration.

It should be noted that the Declaration itself has urged agreement on peace-keeping guide-lines, and has recommended that the Security Council consider the desirability of establishing subsidiary organs, on an *ad hoc* basis, with the participation of the parties concerned, to assist the Council in the performance of its functions as defined in the Charter.

We are aware of the need for continuous United Nations efforts towards the strengthening of international peace and security. However, the problem of strengthening international security cannot be solved by mere improvisation. Member States should enforce or develop policies which can make a significant contribution, within the context of peaceful coexistence, in such a way that they would command the support of the international community. Once such an approach is ensured the Declaration will make the greatest contribution to the revitalization of the United Nations.

The enthusiasm and dedication displayed by Member States and their general stance, during deliberations on the strengthening of international security, offer assurances thaat this can be done. As suggested by the Secretary-General recently at the OAS General Assembly in San José, Costa Rica, Members should now proceed to take effective action for the implementation of the Declaration.

In fact, some positive developments have already taken place in connexion with the strengthening of international peace and security, in particular in the disarmament field.

It is to be recalled that during the debates in the First Committee on the strengthening of international security many speakers strongly felt that there was a direct link between the strengthening of international security and disarmament. This viewpoint is duly reflected in the text of the Declaration. It is difficult to ensure a reliable international security as long as the world military expenditures continue to soar. Last year according to the estimates of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, the world's military spending reached a peak of about 204 thousand million dollars. This outlay was the equivalent in dollar terms of a year's income produced by the 1.8 thousand million people in the lower income part of the world's population. Enormous material and financial resources are wasted on nuclear and conventional armaments at the time when according to a 1970 United Nations report on the world food situation, 375 million people in the third world live on the brink of death from starvation. The task of exploring the ways and means of curbing the arms race and military expenditures is of primary importance. This year a group of international experts assists the Secretary-General in the preparation of an important report on the economic and social consequences of the arms race and military expenditures, which has been requested by the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly. The report is expected to help in assessing the magnitude of the dangers of the arms race for international peace and security and the economic burdens involved and consider the most effective ways of reducing and finally eliminating both the dangers and the burdens and thus facilitating the implementation of much needed programmes of economic and social development in the coming decade. In this respect the report will contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security.

It is extremely important to invigorate the efforts to halt the arms race and to achieve general and complete disarmament as provided for in the Declaration. Among the most recent steps taken in the field of arms control and disarmament I should like to mention the Treaty prohibiting the deployment of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed and ocean floor. This Treaty can be considered as an important development in the struggle to end the arms race, and will serve to enhance more favourable conditions for further definite steps in the field of disarmament and for the alleviation of international tension.

Also of great importance for international peace and security are the efforts to strengthen the 1925 Geneva Protocol through achieving universal adherence to it. Furthermore, the draft convention banning the development, production and stockpiling of bacteriological (biological) weapons recently presented by the USSR and other Socialist countries at the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament has opened a possibility of concluding an important agreement on this subject in the near future. It is hoped that such an agreement would bring closer the complete banning of all chemical and biological weapons.

Another promising development is the continuing SALT talks. A possible agreement reached at these talks could contribute to the curbing of the nuclear arms race. Nuclear disarmament requires, however, participation of all States possessing nuclear weapons. It is encouraging to note that recently two nuclear-weapon Powers, namely the USSR and France, spoke in favour of holding a conference of the five nuclear-weapon Powers. It is my hope that the idea of such a conference will be supported by other nuclear-weapon Powers.

Additional endeavours worth mentioning are the proposals for strengthening European security and co-operation which will serve the cause of international *détente* and peace. Progress in this field will enhance the opportunity for developing policies that would favour the organization of regional security, a contributing factor to the strengthening of international security.

Importance should likewise be attached to the conclusion of treaties between the USSR and the Federal Republic of Germany and between the People's Republic of Poland and the Federal Republic of Germany, which recognize the inviolability of post-Second World War frontiers and endorse the development of mutually beneficial relations. They are important factors for the strengthening of peace and security and stabilization of the situation in Europe.

No less significant are recent pronouncements on the necessity of strengthening United Nations peace-keeping capacity and developing practical means to that end, with the hope that it may be possible to break through the current impasse on procedures and machinery.

Last April the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations resumed its deliberations. It is to be hoped that the Committee will succeed in making positive progress in outlining measures which could strengthen the peace-keeping role of the United Nations.

Yet other important developments can also be derived from recent statements of pertinent sources that indicate a more flexible position on the vital question of the universality of the United Nations.

Also worth mentioning are the recent efforts which have been made by the Special Committee on the Definition of Aggression in carrying out its tasks of formulating a single text of a draft definition. The Special Committee has noted the progress achieved so far and has indicated that its work has shown the common desire of its members to continue their task on the basis of the results attained and to arrive at a draft definition.

Other efforts should also be noted that promise to strengthen international peace and security, particularly more recent endeavours of United Nations organs dealing with the problems of *apartheid* and colonialism.

The implementation of the provisions of the Declaration on the problems of colonialism, racial discrimination and *apartheid* would contribute greatly to the elimination of these evils which is essential for the strengthening of international security.

The continued persistence of colonialism and *apartheid* has already led to violent conflict in several Territories in Africa. Moreover, Portugal, escalating its military activities against the liberation movements, has on several occasions violated the territorial integrity of independent African States.

The General Assembly has recognized that the situation in southern Africa is a grave danger to international peace and security. As the Secretary-General stated at the joint meeting of the three subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly concerned with southern Africa on 3 May, the world community looks to the Security Council to continue its efforts to find ways of solving the problems of southern Africa and of taking effective action against those States which defy its decisions.

Finally, the auspicious initiation in October 1970 of periodic meetings of the Security Council, which provide members with an opportunity for a general exchange of views on the international situation, can also make the Council, it is hoped, a more effective instrument for the maintenance of international peace and security.

As I attempted to point out in the foregoing, the problem of strengthening international security is indeed a central problem of our times. One thing that appears beyond doubt is the need for constructive action to translate the principles and measures included in the Declaration into reality. This need continues to be underlined by the existing conflicts and tensions in many parts of the world, particularly in the Middle East and South East Asia. It goes without saying that the strengthening of international peace and security urgently calls for increasing efforts aimed at achieving the early settlement of conflicts in these areas. This would help to eliminate those sources of tension which endanger world peace and hamper international co-operation among various States.

In concluding my views on the Declaration, I should like to point out that certain credits bestowed upon its architects are very much in order.

Member States have stated their praise of the originator and sponsor of the item, namely the USSR. Other much-deserved praise has been widely bestowed upon the sponsors of the draft proposals, the performance of the working group and the First Committee's Bureau, and efforts of the co-sponsors of the amalgamated draft Declaration. One should again reiterate the fact, however,

that the final Declaration is the fruit of ceaseless dedication on the part of the vast majority of Member States.

Most assuredly, any required action must at all times receive continuous endorsement through the relentless dedication and determination of Member States to ensure peace, progress and justice for all mankind.

It is a sad fact that, throughout history, mankind has only managed to forge new instruments of international order after going through crises and wars. Thus, before forming the League of Nations, the First World War was fought; before forming the United Nations, the Second World War was waged. It is high time that we learned to make progress *before* a crisis becomes acute, *before* hostilities actually break out, and *before* catastrophe threatens. The Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security affords mankind precisely such an opportunity. Let us take it boldly and advance on the road to peace. It is a sacred duty of the United Nations to implement fully the Declaration for ensuring international peace and security.

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